

Dionysos - A

DIONYSOS

I can withstand torture, I can brave the elements. I can deal with life's various unpleasantries: war, violence, famine, floods. There is just one thing I cannot abide, that shakes my very marrow to the soul and that's - Frogs.

Slimy, ugly, disgusting nuisances. They have big mouths and narrow little eyes to match their narrow little points of view. Croaking and ribbetting their way into your brain. Jumping up when you least expect it to scare the hell out of you.

(He shudders intensely)

And they're everywhere. At first glance they seem harmless enough, but in the blink of an eye they've got their tongues wrapped around you and they've pulled you into their sick sedentary little universe. They hate change. They hate new ideas. They just like what's good for them. And they'd like everyone to think the way they do. They'd like to turn us all into frogs.



DIONYSOS

Yes, speak what we feel.

Dare I say it - what have we learned?

We must participate or prepare to be burned.

Frogs will be frogs and life's for the living.

Man must use his brain or there'll be much misgiving.

I've taken a chance, I've brought back a poet.

Let's take charge of the world before it's gone as we know it.

Dionysos - B

DIONYSOS

Herakles, although we have never met, I know all about you. Yet, how could I have imagined you would be so...

so...What's the word?

HERAKLES

Buff?

DIONYSOS

Majestic.

HERAKLES

You want something.

DIONYSOS

You're psychic as well. Herakles, have you ever been obsessed?

HERAKLES

What do you mean obsessed?

DIONYSOS

Have you ever been fired by so great a desire, you could think of nothing else? Let us say a beautiful woman. Get it?

HERAKLES

Got it.

DIONYSOS

Good. I am so fired.

HERAKLES

Who is she?

DIONYSOS

She? She is not a woman.

HERAKLES

Well, that happens. This is ancient Greece.

DIONYSOS

You misunderstand. I am obsessed by George Bernard Shaw.

HERAKLES

The one who wrote the plays?

DIONYSOS

Yes, the one who wrote the plays. Now in your travels I'm sure you must have noticed that the world is in terrible shape. That is why I have decided to bring Mr. Shaw back from Hades -

Xanthias

XANTHIAS

What'll I do? What'll I do? Alright, don't panic. Look at the situation calmly. You're in the middle of the River Styx on your way to hell, the boatman is stoned, and your master has been eaten by a humongous frog.

(HE screams)

Well folks, this can mean only one thing. This show is now about me! And not a moment too soon.

It all started for me in a little village called "Agita", right off the Aegean coastline. It was an apathetic community filled with procrastinators and worrywarts. Believe me, if it "takes a village" this was not the one to take. I was the 28th of 56 kids, classic middle-child syndrome, directionless, I blamed my parents for everything – but it's hard not to hold a grudge when the last words you hear your parents say are "How much?" and "We'll throw in the mule".



XANTHIAS

Oy. Don't you know anyone with a flying chariot we could borrow?

DIONYSOS

I'm afraid not. You know, Xanthias, I know so little about you, really. Did you always want to be a slave?

XANTHIAS

Strangely, no. My parents sold me into slavery because they desperately needed the money.

DIONYSOS

For what?

XANTHIAS

To open the first adult novelty shop in the city. Basically, they sold condoms to Trojans. I hope one day to buy my freedom and seek my revenge.

Herakles

HERAKLES

This isn't a weekend getaway. This is Hades we're talking about. The underworld. First you must cross the River Styx...

DIONYSOS

Of course, how silly of me – The River Styx...yes, yes.

HERAKLES

It is a great swampy bottomless river of muck and mire.

DIONYSOS

Muck and mire...gotcha.

HERAKLES

At night you can hear the cries of the world's lost souls.

DIONYSOS

We'll fit right in.

HERAKLES

Look for Charon the boatman –

He'll take you across.



HERAKLES

Dionysos, rest assured, when they see that lionskin and that mighty club, they will know you are Herakles. Now on your way. I must get my gear. I go to clean the Augean stables.

DIONYSOS

No shit.

HERAKLES

Unfortunately, that is not the case.

(HE sighs heavily and exits)

Charon - A

CHARON

Charon's the name.

DIONYSOS

Your reputation precedes you. And what a charming little skiff you have. I wish to go to Hades.

CHARON

Pluto's Retreat?

DIONYSOS

Yes.

CHARON

It's a helluva town.

DIONYSOS

Yes.

CHARON

Hell bent on going?

DIONYSOS

Yes.

CHARON

Come hell or high water?

DIONYSOS

Yes.

CHARON

There'll be hell to pay.

DIONYSOS

Don't you think you've taken that joke as far as it can go?

CHARON

Hell, no!

DIONYSOS

Please stop.

CHARON

When hell freezes over.

Charon - B

CHARON

This might be a good time to inform you that the River Styx cruiseline is in no way responsible for any mishaps on your way to Hades. We hope this won't affect your choice of cruiseline the next time you decide to travel to the underworld.

DIONYSOS

You're the only cruiseline.

CHARON

And that's why we're number one.

Land ho!

DIONYSOS

Is this Hades?

CHARON

The end of the line. That'll be four obols.

DIONYSOS

Typical! Don't you hate that mentality? Here -

(HE hands CHARON the obols)

CHARON

Well, boys, I'm not a sentimental man, and it may be the weed talkin', but I'm gonna miss you two.

DIONYSOS

Aw, really?

CHARON

Naah, I'm just high! Adios. I'll be back tomorrow. And remember you can only stay for 24 hours.

Aeakos

AEAKOS

I am Aeakos, keeper of the keys to the palace of Pluto. Pluto, son of Kronos, Pluto, lord of the lower regions and ruler of the peaceful dead.

DIONYSOS

Pardon me, but you look awfully familiar.

AEAKOS

I have one of those faces.

DIONYSOS

No, you bear an uncanny resemblance to the boat man on the River Styx.

AEAKOS

That's my twin brother. We were separated at birth and I'd like to keep it that way.

DIONYSOS

I didn't mean to pry.

AEAKOS

Who is he who seeks entrance to the Palace of Pluto? Pluto, son of Kronos, Pluto, lord of the-

DIONYSOS

Yes, we got all that. It is I, Herakles.

AEAKOS

Who?

DIONYSOS

He - ra - kles.

AEAKOS

Speak up!

DIONYSOS

HE - RA - KLES!

AEAKOS

You admit it?

DIONYSOS

Well, I don't like to brag, but yes.

AEAKOS

Vengeance! Vengeance! Returning to the scene of the crime, eh? You dirty dog-murdering bastard! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Well, I got ya right where I want you now. I'm gonna have you flung off a cliff onto the Stygian rocks. Wait right there! I shall return when I have mustered my men.

Pluto

PLUTO

Tell me, my boy, what brings you to Hades? Business or pleasure?

DIONYSOS

Pleasure. But first, I must apologize for all the commotion. For some reason Aeakos mistook me for Herakles.

PLUTO

You're kidding.

DIONYSOS

No.

PLUTO

Oh, that is funny. That is really funny. No, no, Herakles is a tall man. Much taller. He is what you would call tall. Not to mention gorgeous, with muscles for days. And beautiful hair. And a dark smoldering sensuality. And you – well that's just hysterical.

DIONYSOS

It's not that funny.

PLUTO

It's pretty funny. Anyway, where were we? Oh – Herakles. He paid me a visit awhile back. I couldn't do enough for him. And then when he leaves, he kills Cerberus. Not nice. Really, was that necessary? Of course, I never much liked the animal. Three heads, yapping and howling all through the night. And we were never able to housebreak it. You don't want to know. But Herakles shouldn't have killed him. Mind you, it's not the dog, it's the principle of the thing.

DIONYSOS

Of course. I must say, Herakles painted a rather intimidating picture of Hades.

PLUTO

Well, he's not exactly the brightest flame in the candelabra, is he?

Shaw

SHAW

It's quite true. My plays are all words just as Raphael's pictures are all paint, Michelangelo's statues are all marble, and Beethoven's symphonies are all noise. Your plays are trash of the lowest melodramatic order, in parts abominably written, throughout intellectually vulgar and exasperating beyond all tolerance.



SHAW

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.



SHAW

It is no more possible for me to do my work honestly as a playwright without giving pain, sir, than it is for a dentist. My job is to force the public to reconsider their morals. And morals are like teeth, sir, the more decayed, the more it hurts to touch them.

DIONYSOS

But you will joke with them.

SHAW

My way of joking is to tell the truth. It's the funniest joke in the world.



SHAW

Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.

Shakespeare

SHAKESPEARE

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.



SHAKESPEARE

(To Dionysos)

Aye sir, yet a new beginning calls for a new play.
The weight of this sad time we must obey:
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.



SHAKESPEARE

Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

Ariadne

DIONYSOS

Can it be? Ariadne?

ARIADNE

Yes, my beloved.

DIONYSOS

My life has not been the same without you.

ARIADNE

Nor mine.

DIONYSOS

Ariadne, you must come back with me.

ARIADNE

No. It would make my death meaningless. The gods had a purpose when they took me away from you. They wanted to teach you the pain of loss.

DIONYSOS

And they succeeded.

ARIADNE

But so did you. You became stronger. I can see that. Now go finish this, help the world, defy the gods, die in some tragic way and come back to me.

DIONYSOS

I like a woman who knows what she wants. I worship and adore you.

ARIADNE

Good luck, my love. I'll be waiting for you.

And when you do return, could you bring me back my crown?

Charisma

HANDMAIDEN

That lionskin, who could forget it?

Herakles! Oh, Herakles, you have come back to us. Remember me, Charisma, handmaiden to Persephone? Remember the fun we had?

Persephone and the girls talk about you all the time. Your broad shoulders. Your tough thighs. Your big...club!

It's even bigger than I remembered! You are going to pay us a visit? Are you not?

We shall feast and dance and make love all through the night. Herakles has returned. I must tell the others. Farewell for the moment.

Virilla

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

Now where is that girdle?

DIONYSOS

What girdle?

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

Hippolyta's! I bet you stole it to go with those sandals!

DIONYSOS

These are gilded buskins.

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

Same thing.

When did you become so fashion conscious?

DIONYSOS

See here!

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

Oh you didn't just try to hit me with that stick, did you? Did you? Did you?

DIONYSOS

Yes, I did!

(VIRILLA THE AMAZON lets out a warlike cry)

No, I didn't.

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

I want that girdle back and I want it now. You should see Hippolyta without it. And she's not the same woman. Won't go out, have fun, make war. Where is that girdle? I know you're not wearing it – so where is it?

DIONYSOS

She only had one girdle?

VIRILLA THE AMAZON

Silence!